RETROFITTING ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENTS IN RESPONSE TO AN EVOLVING WORKPLACE

HI!

I'm Lexi!

- Western North Dakota native
- Community enthusiast
- History marvel
- Covid-19 education conqueror

HOW CAN OUR ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENTS AFFECT OUR PRODUCTIVITY?

HOW CAN WE, AS DESIGNERS, RESPOND TO THE DEMAND OF THE SHIFTING WORKPLACE?

Why Office Buildings Are Still in Trouble

Hybrid work, layoffs and higher interest rates are leaving lots of office space vacant and hurting the commercial real estate business.

What's Going to Happen to All Those Empty Office Buildings?

Don't Fret About Empty Office Space—Repurpose It

Tech Layoffs Mean Even More Empty Offices in NYC, San Francisco

A pullback by tech tenants means trouble for landlords already struggling with empty buildings.

There's no easy fix for Midtown's post-COVID half-empty offices

By Nicole Gelinas

February 27, 2023 | 7:56pm | Updated

Getting Creative With Vacant Office Space: Storage, Gym, Film Set

Some landlords are skipping residential conversion and instead seeking alternatives that are cheaper and easier to manage.

SOCIETY

What Should We Do With All the Empty Offices?

January 3, 2023

COMMERCIAL · **Published** April 13, 2023 6:18am EDT

Commercial real estate industry on edge as downtown empty office space goes unused

INITIAL QUESTIONS

for vacant office buildings post Covid-19 pandemic

What are these vacant office buildings doing now?

How can we best repurpose buildings?

Who are these building destined to serve?

What new amenities is the workplace demanding?

Are there any design principles we should be abiding by?

How can we redesign and repurpose + still respect community history?

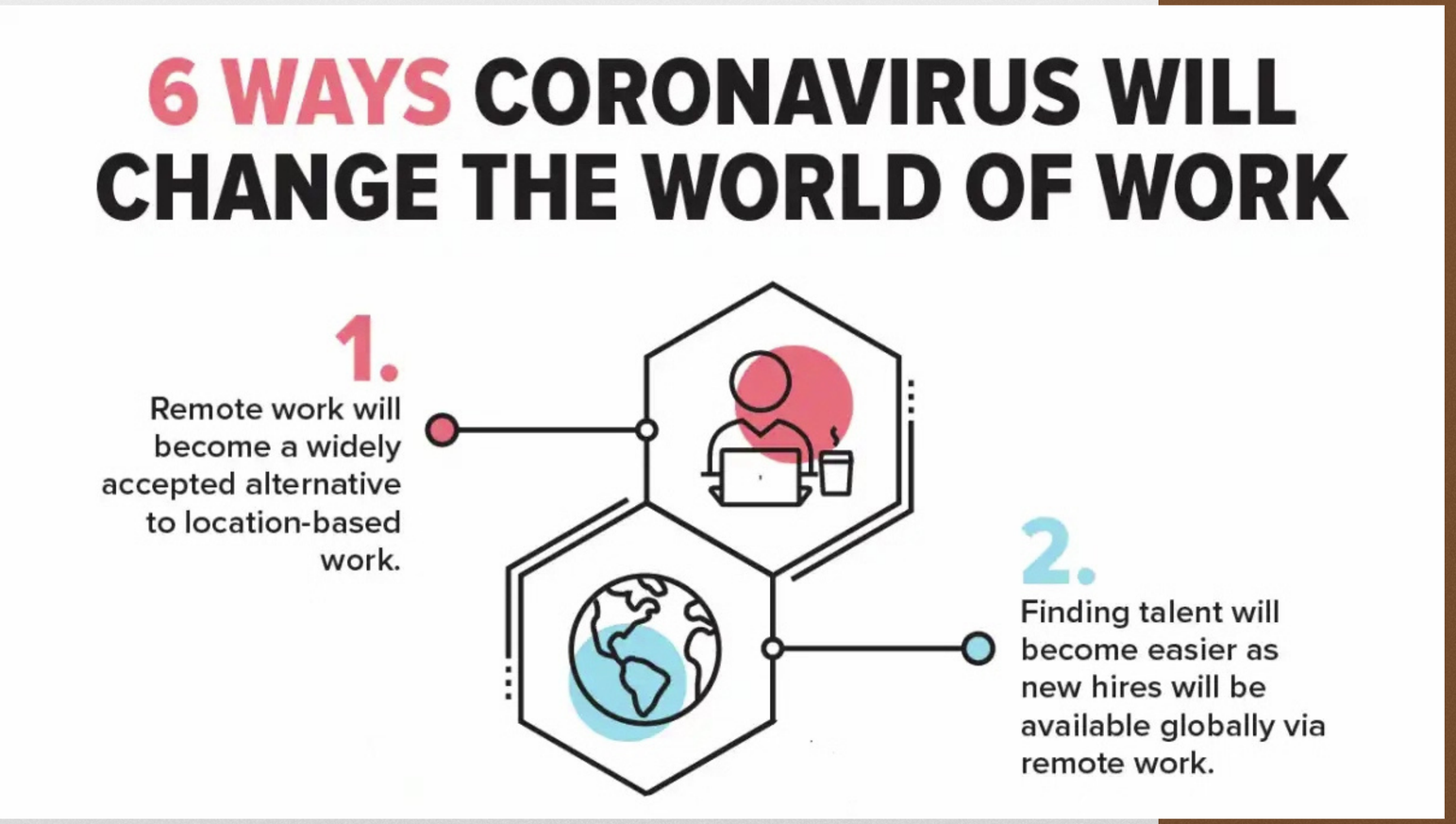
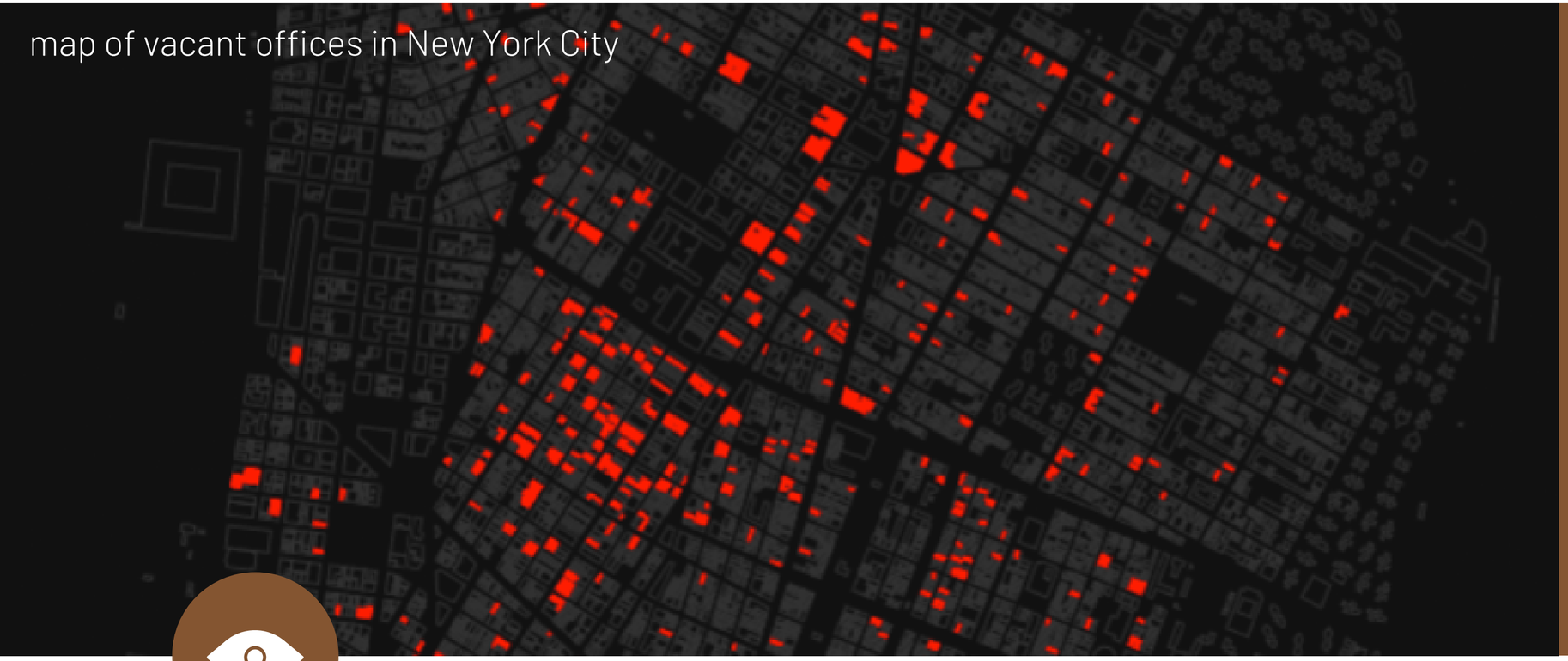


photo from article by SHRM - "6 ways Coronavirus Will Change The World Of Work"

Work is changing... and our environments need to be a reflection of that.



map of vacant offices in New York City

Patterns to inform redesign...

Prototype Project

This project uses universal tendencies and design patterns to sculpt a series of design principles that are desired in our new workplace.

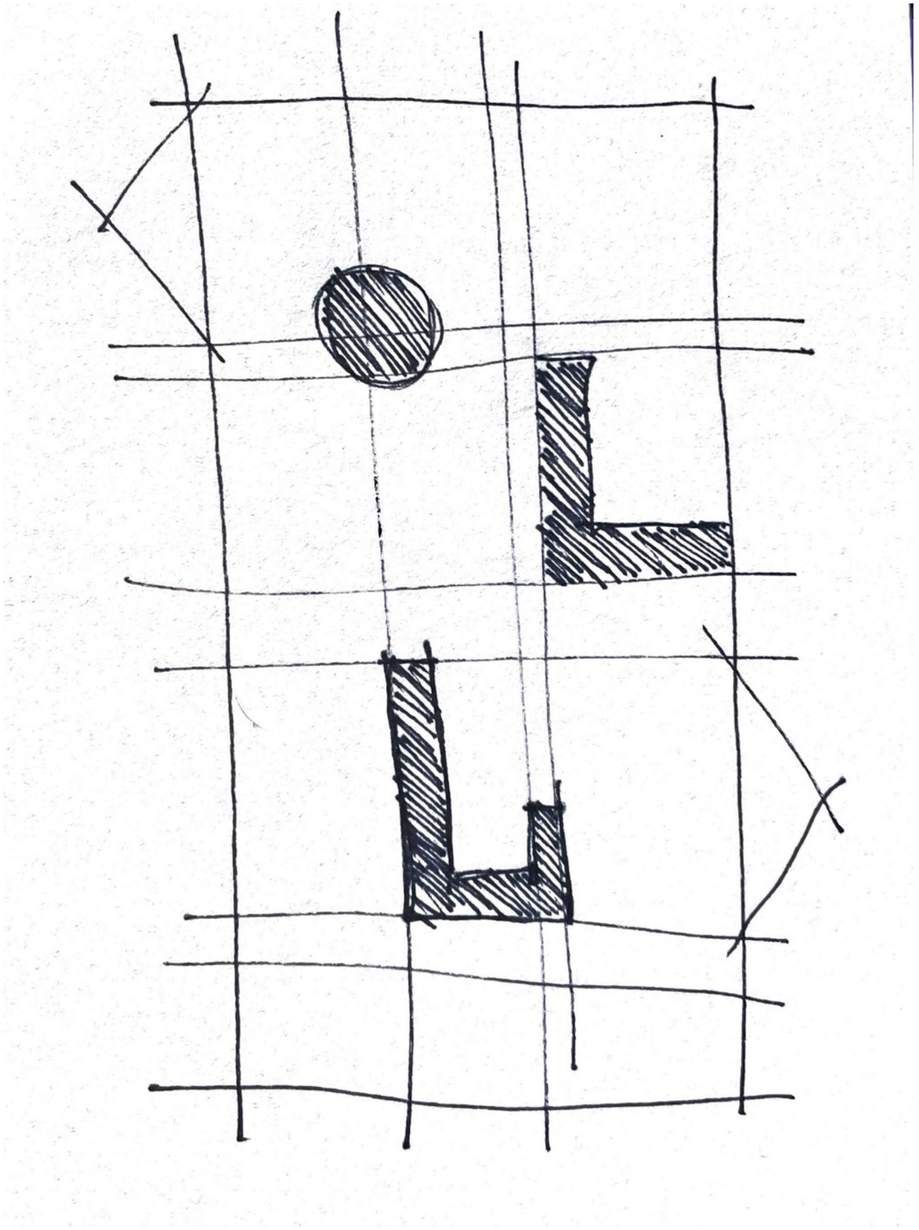
Intentional Interventions

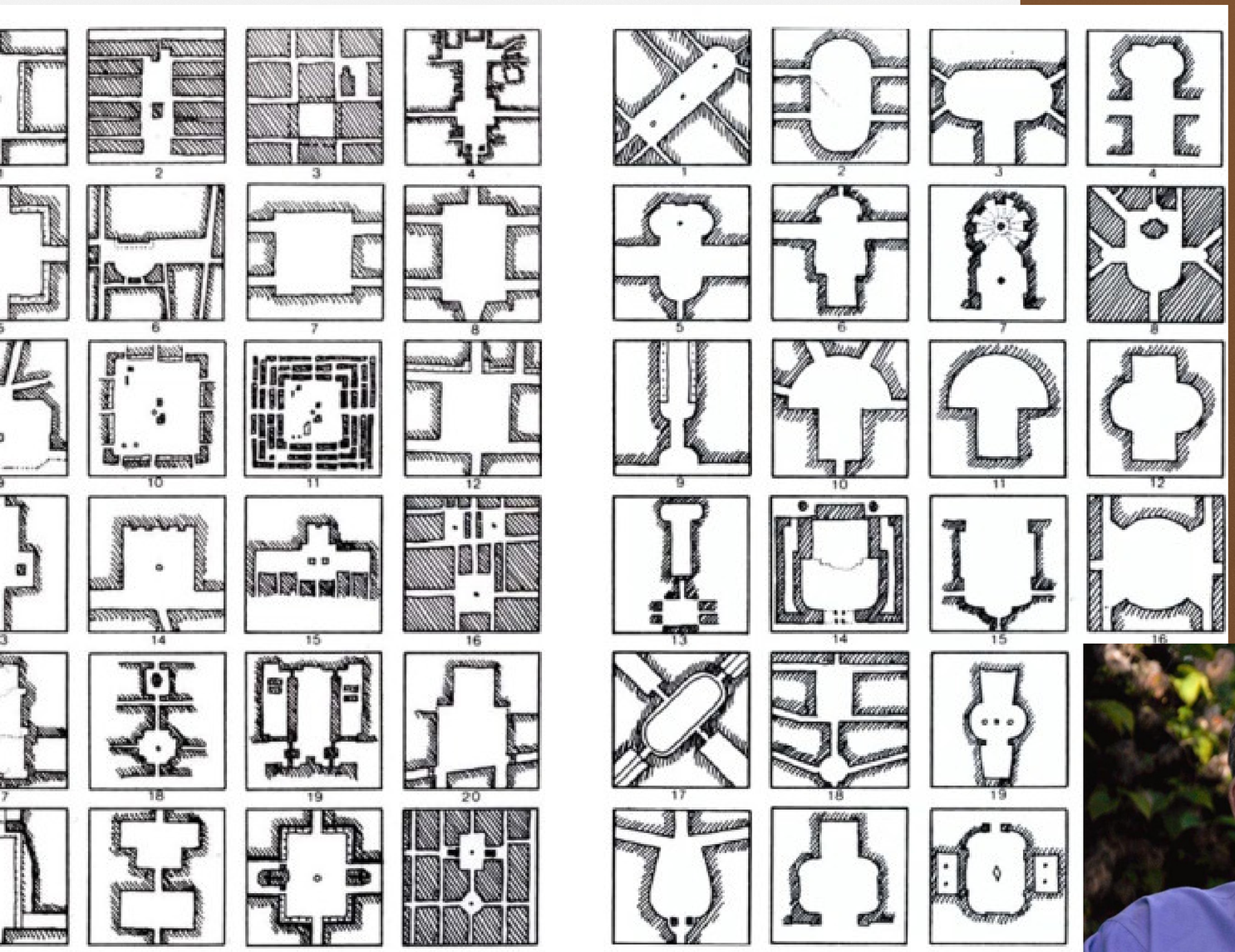
Affordable

- competitive to lease
- maximizing the square foot
- product selection

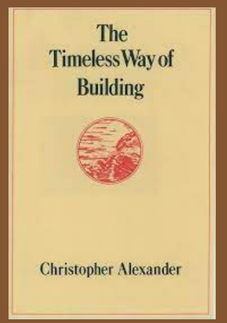
Accessible

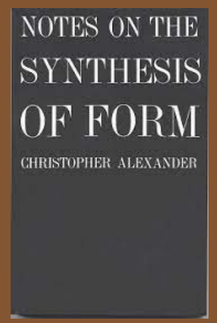
- big city vs small town
- all remote working people & investors

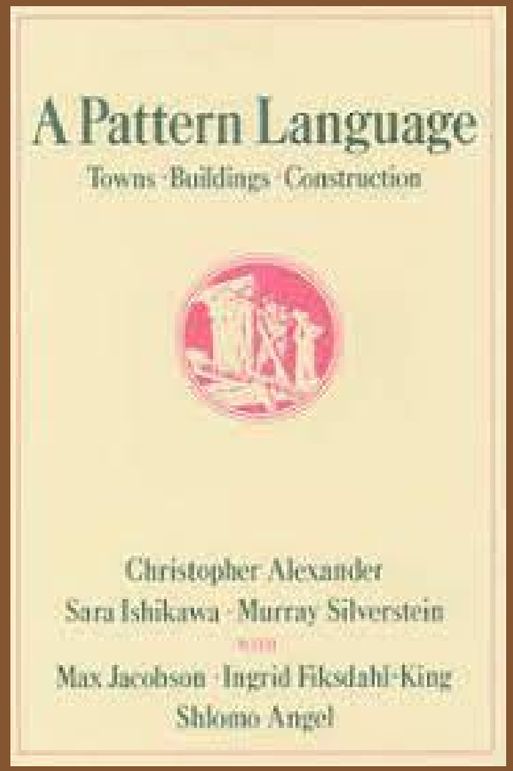


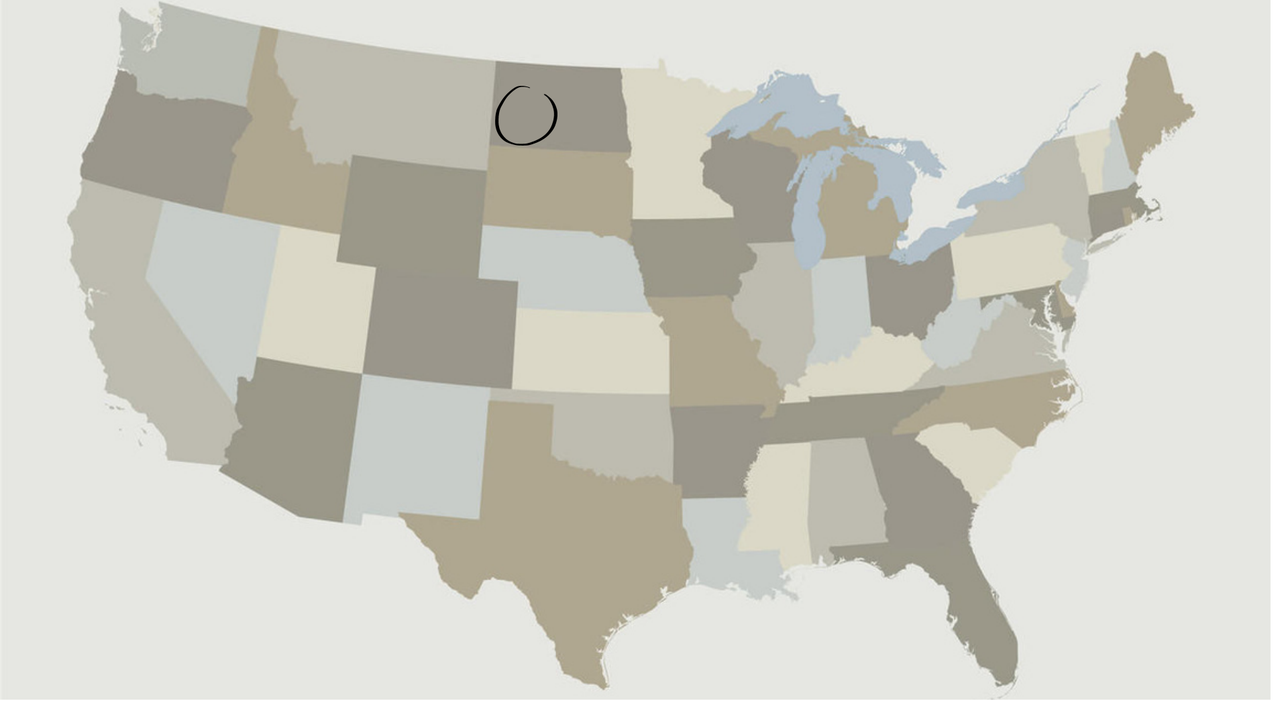


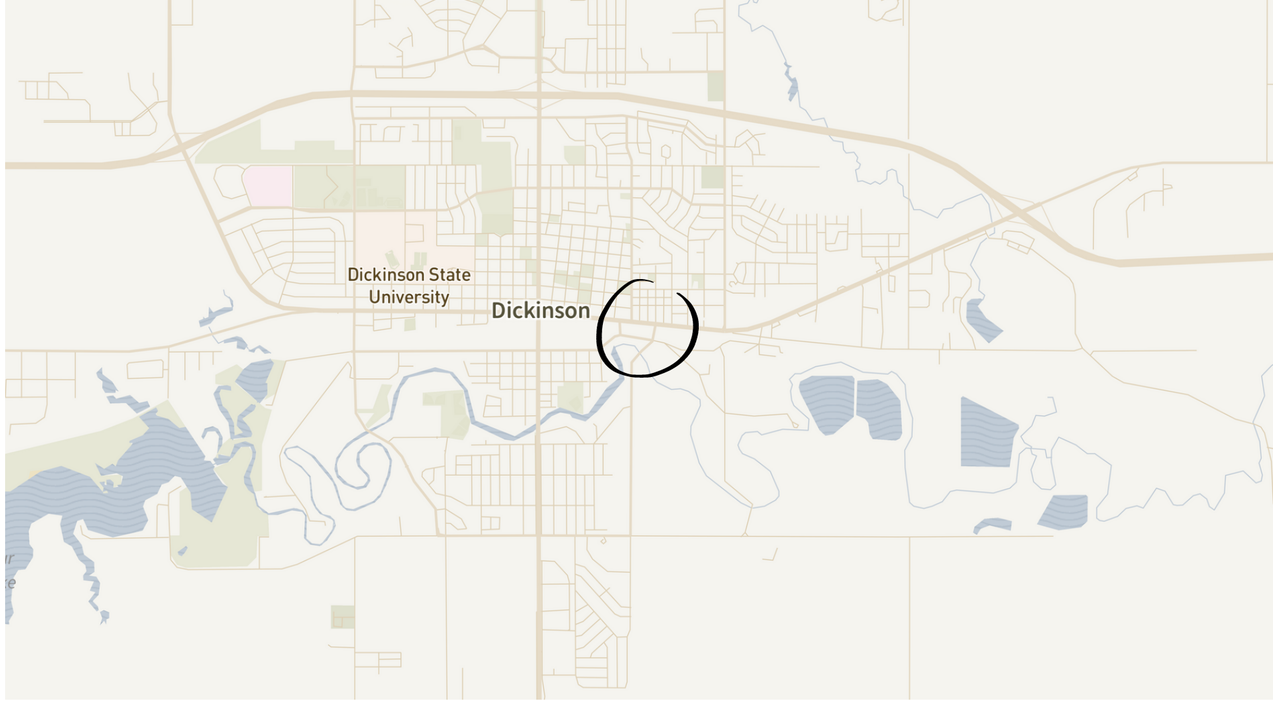
What makes an environment feel comfortable?











Site + Building Selection

41 East Villard St.

a landmark in hopes of a new life

- Fire burnt the building to ground in 1950
- Ray Hotel functioned from 1952-1970
- Ivanhoe Inn functioned from 1971-1987
    - home to many travelers (being adjacent from railroad station)
- Plaza took modern day ownership approach in 1995

Project Emphasis

"...to design a place that people love to be in,

that is the ultimate form of sustainability."

Retrofit

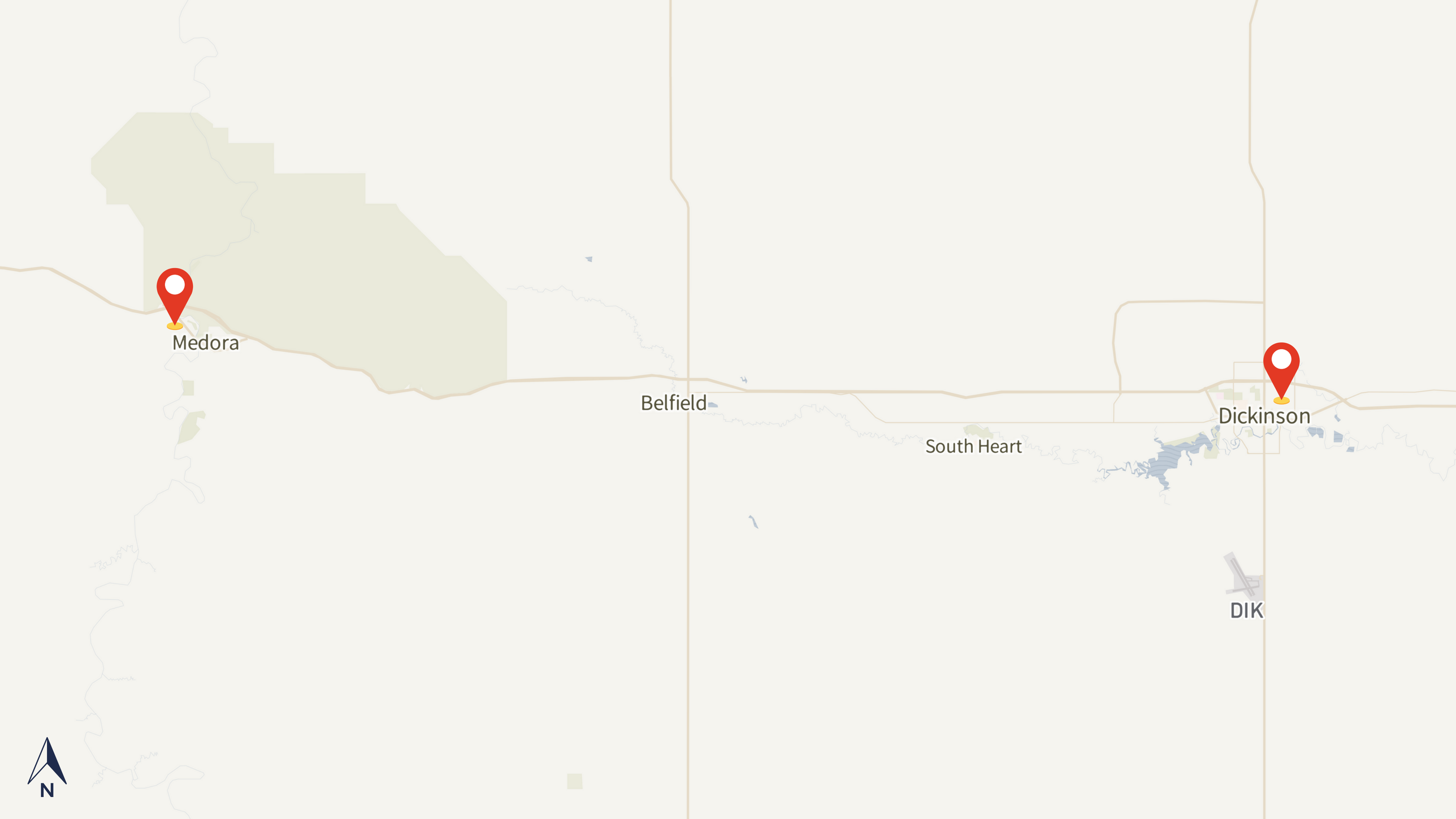
Designing subtle interventions that use Christopher Alexanders timeless design principles as a pathway

Materiality

Choosing products that are affordable, accessible, and sustainable for the environment they came from, and the environment they will go to (VOC conscious).

Marketability

How can we design sustainable buildings that will withstand "crisis" in the future?


Medora
Belfield
South Heart
Dickinson
DIK
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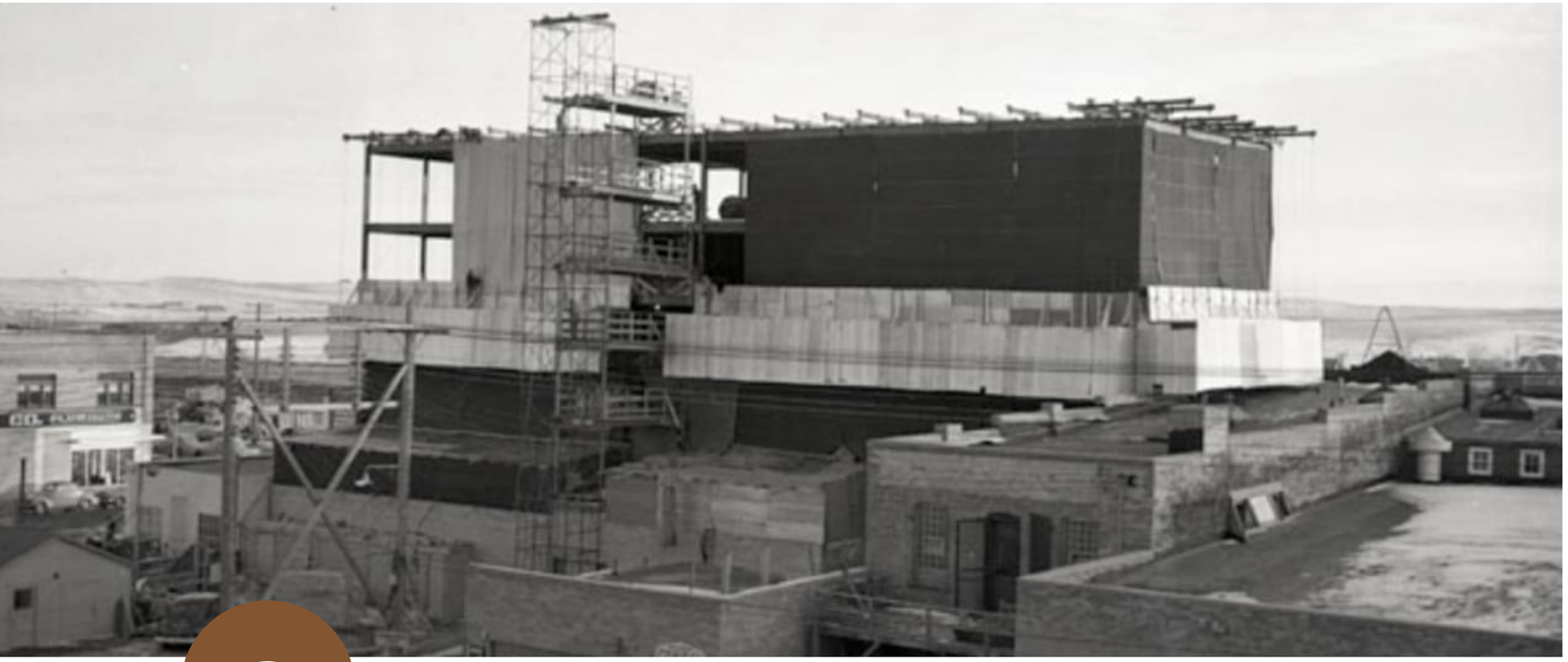

Existing Conditions

41 East Villard Street, Dickinson, ND 58601

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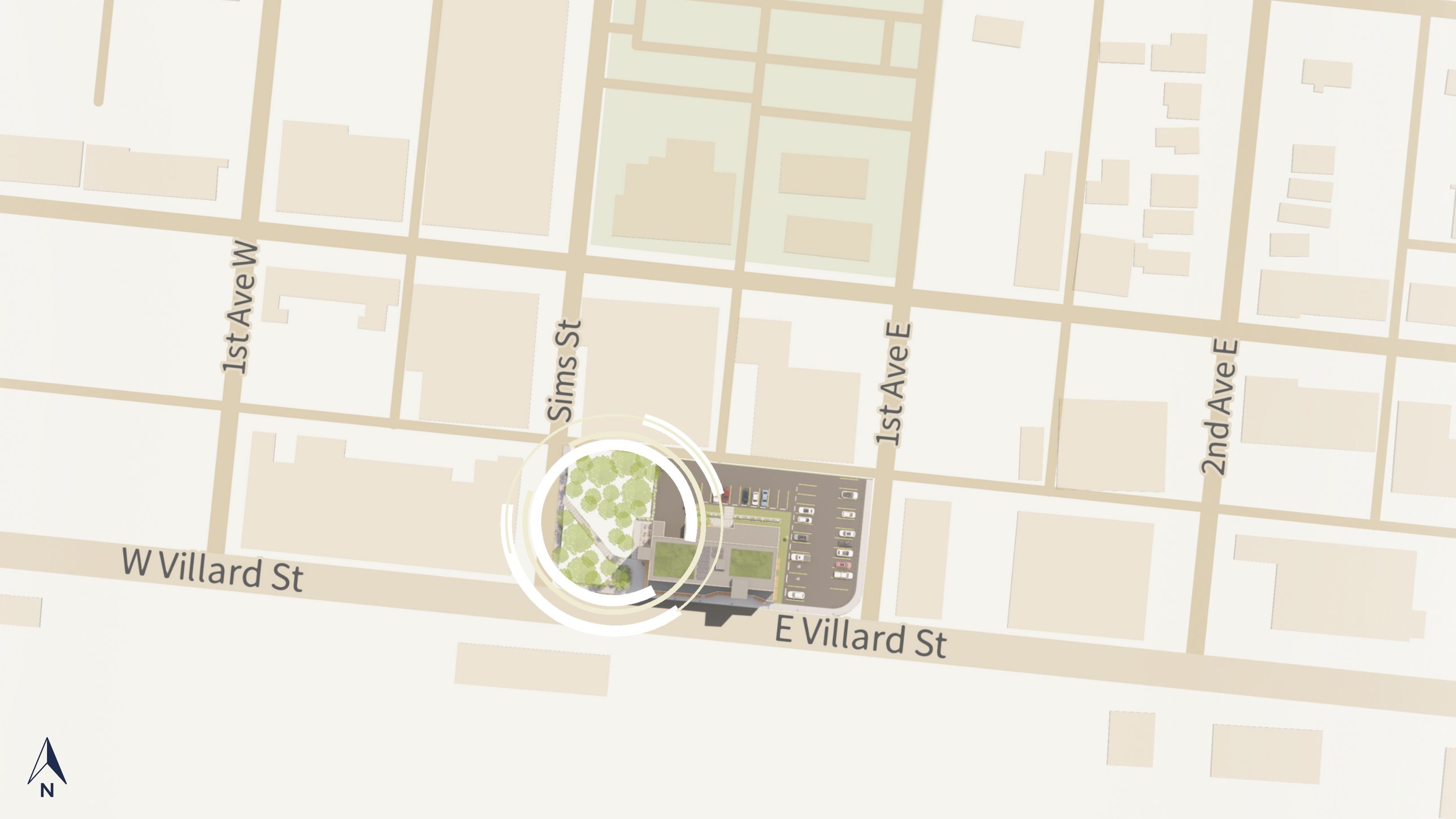
1st Ave W
Sims St
1st Ave E
2nd Ave E
W Villard St
E Villard St
N

PRESENT DAY

PROPOSED

PRESENT DAY

PROPOSED

Challenges turn into opportunities

Finding the proper resources, products, and making the right design decisions.

Employees and business owners face new challenges in the workforce since the covid-19 pandemic and will continue to do so.

LUMION

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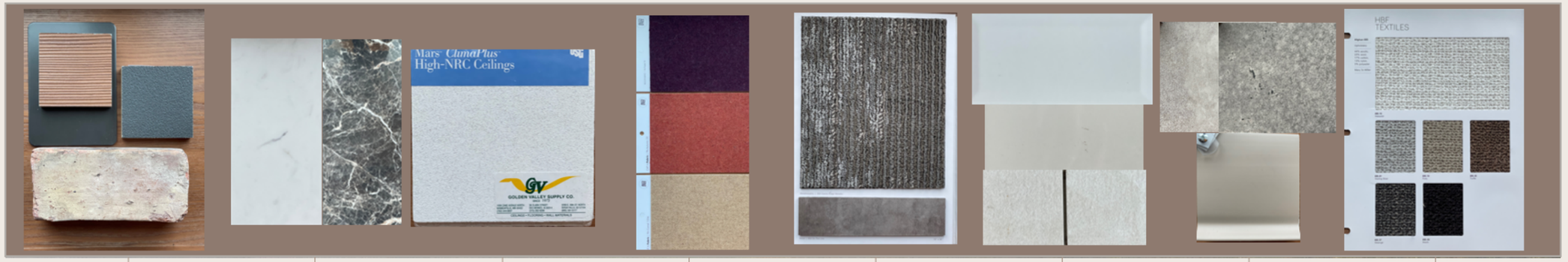
Material Selections



EXTERIOR

Local brick: Hebron Brick Co.

Nichiha fiber cement wall panels with built-in rainscreen (Riftsawn and Tuffblock)

Alucobond aluminum composite cladding

PORCELIN SURFACES

Durable, easy to clean and maintain, stain resistant, low absorption rate for bacteria, low maintenance (no sealing/special cleaning), economical

ACOUSTIC CEILING TILES

MARS ClimaPlus High-NRC Panels

2'x2'x7/8" – Low VOC – 77& recycled content

Grid option Centricitee

Buzzi Pod FABRICS

Felt to assist in acoustical balance + colors to differentiate and excite workers

LVT + Iconic Earth CARPET TILE

Metalmorphic tufted 18"x36" carpet planks, 20 mil, 10-year warranty, built-in acoustical layer, 2x as thick as conventional LVT, 8% bio-based renewable resource content, LEED, WELL, and LBC certified

TILE

Daltile tile, LEED certified

LVT FLOORING + TRIM

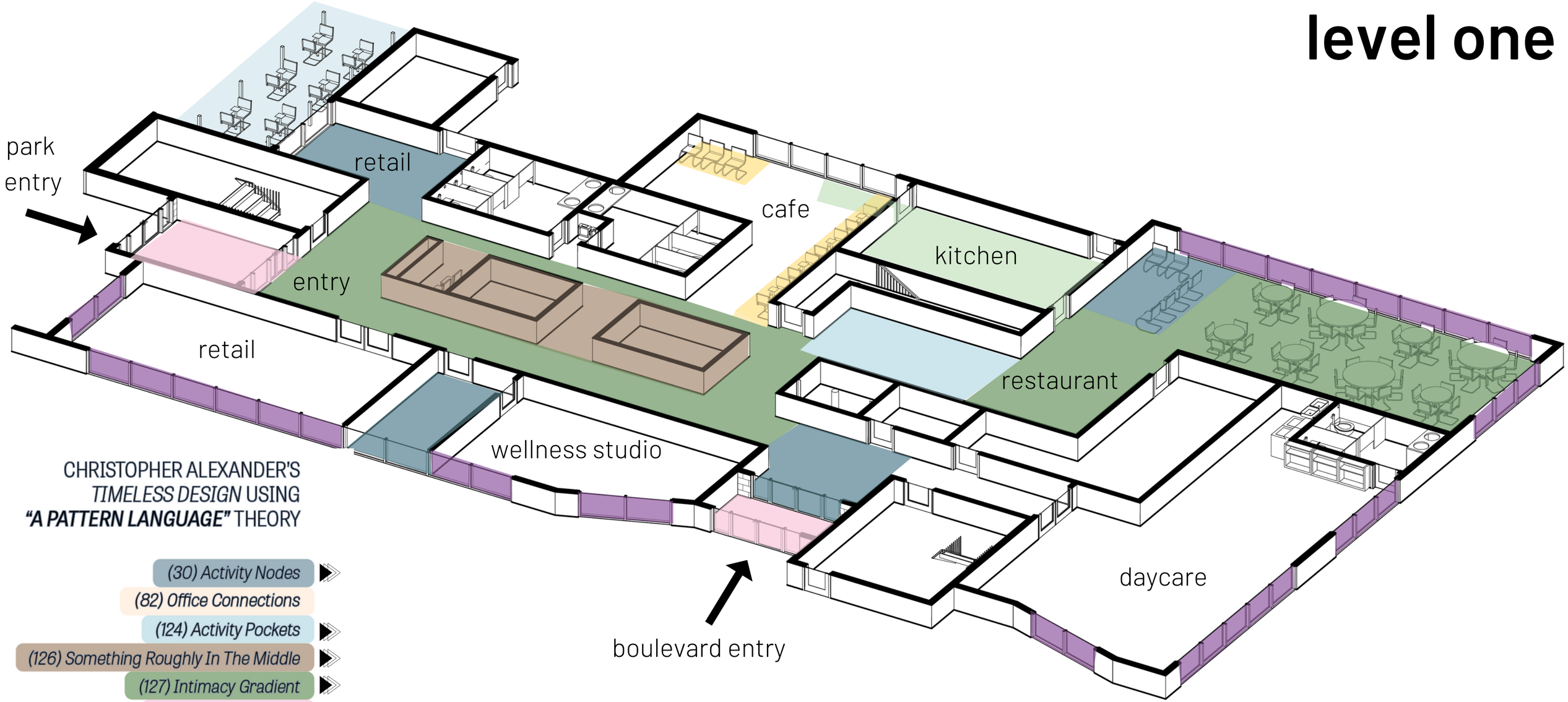
Criterion Classic LVT, 100% carbon neutral, fully recyclable, 22 mil

High grade resin and TP rubber trim

HBF TEXTILES + UPHOLSTRY

Flame resistant, 40% rapidly renewable content, SCS Indoor Advantage Gold, HHI V2 Compliant

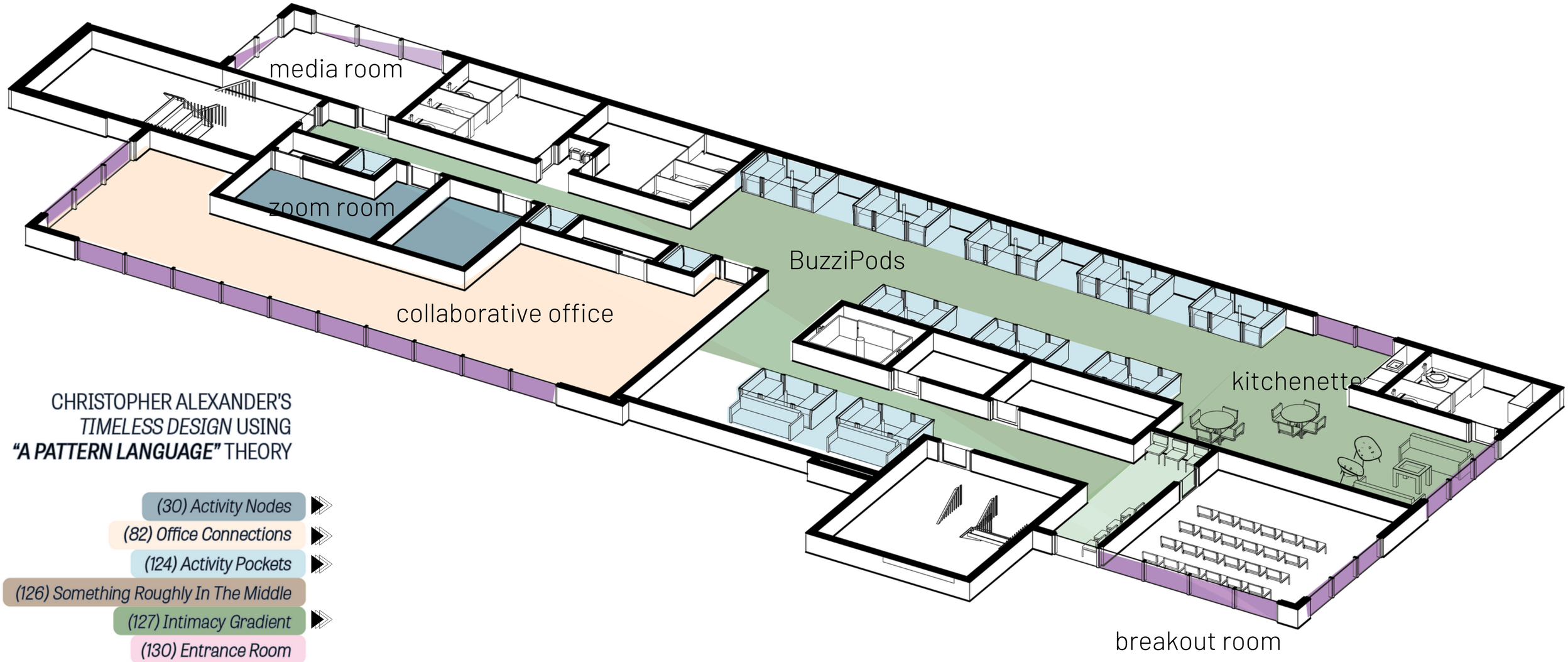
level one



CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER'S
TIMELESS DESIGN USING
"A PATTERN LANGUAGE" THEORY

- *(30) Activity Nodes*
- *(82) Office Connections*
- *(124) Activity Pockets*
- *(126) Something Roughly In The Middle*
- *(127) Intimacy Gradient*
- *(130) Entrance Room*
- *(131) The Flow Through Rooms*
- *(132) Short Passages*
- *(142) Sequence of Sitting Spaces*
- *(159) Light on Two Sides of Every Room*
- *(171) Tree Places*

level two



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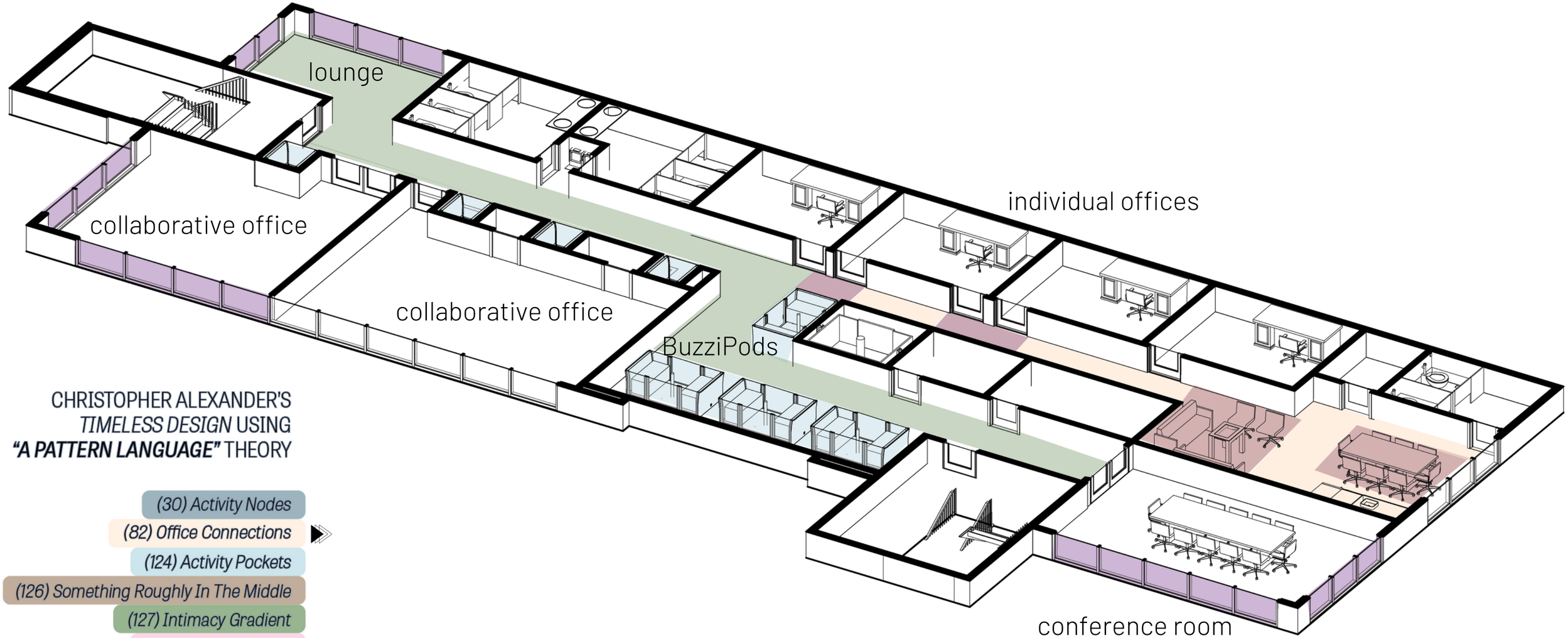
level three



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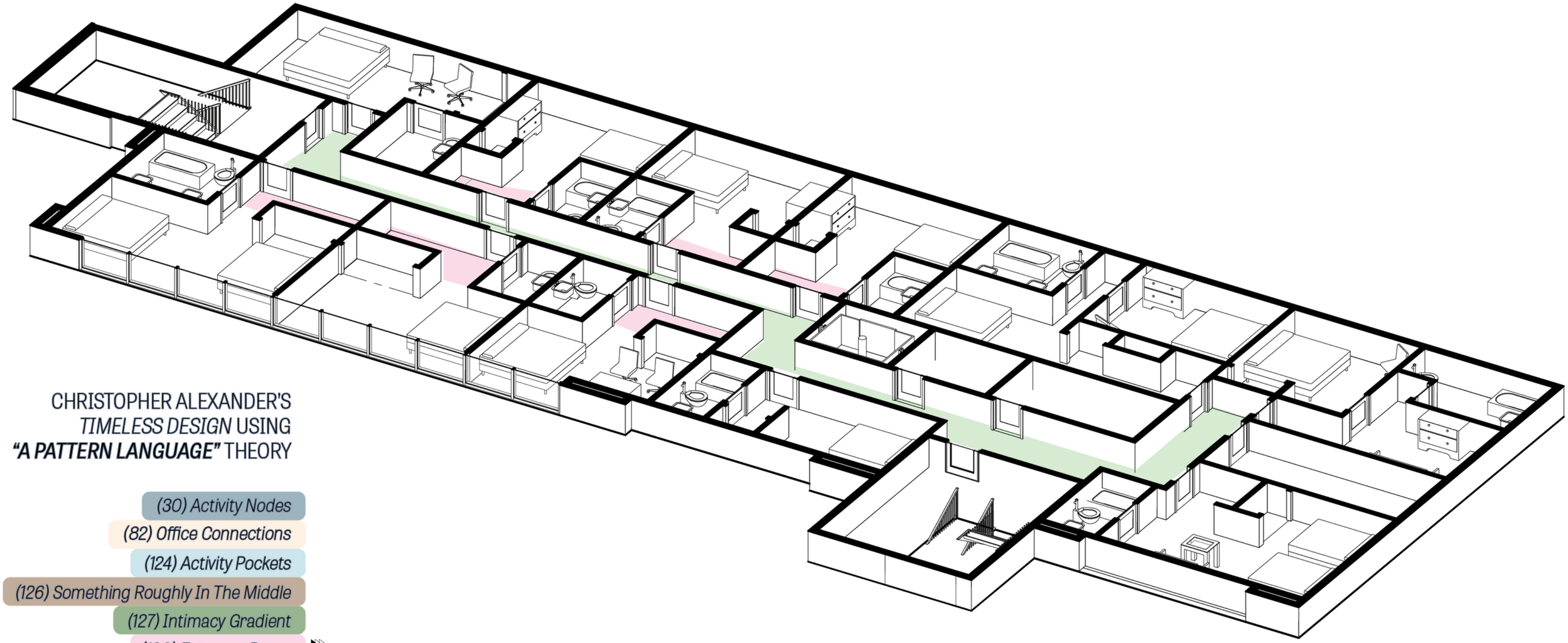
levels four-six



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Important Spatial Adjacencies

- BuzziPods
- Conference Rooms
- Collaborative Work Areas
- Cafe
- Restaurant
- Daycare

My project answers the question...

Can we, as designers, retrofit vacant and under-utilized commercial office buildings into clever, thoughtful, and pattern-driven architectural environments that will not only benefit our economy's new style of remote work, but also provide employees and communities with useful spaces that will set them up for their optimal form of work/lifeproductivity?

THANK YOU

Lexi Jordheim

Ultimately, the key to creating useful and profitable architecture in a post-pandemic world is to focus on designing spaces that are adaptable, flexible, and responsive to changing needs. By embracing new technologies and incorporating sustainable design principles, architects can create buildings that not only meet the needs of their occupants and property owners but also contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future.

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